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Environmental Quality Commission
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Environmental Quality Commission

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February 7, 2005

The Honorable Ray Jones
P.O. Drawer 3850
Pikeville, KY 41502

The Honorable Robin Webb
404 West Main St.
Grayson, KY 41143

Dear Senator Jones and Representative Webb:

The Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) would like to express to you its strong support to strengthen emergency response programs related to high hazard impoundments in Kentucky.

EQC on three separate occasions has recognized the need to protect the public from possible failures of high hazard dams and impoundments.

- In 1988 EQC convened a Dam Safety Advisory Committee. The committee unanimously recommended that based on criteria developed jointly developed by the Division of Disaster and Emergency Services and the Division of Water, owners of high hazard impoundments be required to develop and maintain an emergency response/preparedness plan and local DES coordinators receive the plans and hold periodic drills as needed.
- In 2001, after the failure of the Martin County Coal slurry impoundment, EQC recommended that all high hazard impoundments be required to prepare emergency response plans.
- In 2002, after a rash of spills and the new threats posed by terrorist attacks, EQC called for a statewide inventory of all high hazard high/risk facilities and the promulgation of state rules to require emergency action plans for all hazard dams and impoundments.

EQC offers its full support to the attached proposed language supporting emergency response plans for high hazard impoundments in Kentucky. Such plans are critical to saving lives if an emergency should occur.

Please feel free to contact Leslie Cole, Director of EQC or myself if EQC can be of any assistance to you to promote passage of this important resolution in the 2005 Legislative Session. Thank you for your interest in this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lindell Ormsbee".

Lindell Ormsbee, Chair
Environmental Quality Commission

Cc Governor Ernie Fletcher
LaJuana Wilcher, Secretary, Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet